

BEING A PART OF IT

REGIONAL LAUNCH OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES PLANS 2005-2008

Delegates from the Northern Health and Social Services Board area attended the launch of the Children's Services Plans for each of the Area Children and Young People's Committees (ACYPC) in the four Board's in Northern Ireland.

Launched by Mr Paul Martin, Chief Inspector, Social Services Inspectorate, the aim of the Plans is to improve the well-being of vulnerable children and young people. The Plans have been based on assessed need and developed in a co-ordinated and inter-agency way. They set out the key result areas for Children's Services over the next three years.

Mr Kevin Keenan, Chair of the Northern Area Children and Young People's Committee described how the Plans would build on the foundation of agreed needs assessment, children's rights, joint planning and inclusion of young people that have characterised Children's Services Planning to-date.

Speaking at the Launch, Con Hogan, former Director of the Vermont Agency of Human Studies, commended the work of the ACYPCs over the past six years. In the new plans the focus is on outcomes which describe the life we all want for our all our children and young people.

Mr Hogan commented:

“Everyone, from Government to people in communities, has a role to play in achieving the targets that will improve the lives of young people. Children Services Planning is an excellent vehicle for doing this and for achieving a better future for all our children.’

Nicola Rodgers, a young person from the Western Board, introduced examples of integrated services which were showcased in a market place of good practice. These included projects from Larne, Bushmills and Looked After Children Support Services.

Dr Tom Frawley, NI Ombudsman and Commissioner for Complaints, who also presented at the Launch, said:

“The Children’s Services Plans are to be welcomed. They provide a safe and transparent way of ensuring that the lives of all children in Northern Ireland are improved and that the needs of children and young people are assessed in a consistent manner”.

Other speakers at the launch included Barney McNeeny, Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Commission for Children and Young People, Ann Godfrey, Children’s Services Planner with the SHSSB and Professor Dominic Burke, Director of Social Care with the WHSSB.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

There are four Children and Young People’s Committees in Northern Ireland each led by the respective Health and Social Services Board. These Committees bring together senior representatives from statutory, voluntary and community organisations, to plan services for vulnerable children and young people.

In each Board area, the work is carried out by a range of sub-groups, again comprising statutory, voluntary and community organizations organisations. Each sub-group works on a different aspect of children’s lives, for example, disability, young people and crime, children in care etc. In the Northern Board area Locality Partnerships have also been introduced in Bushmills, Larne, Carrickfergus and Cookstown.

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